

Praying with purpose post session pack

You will find all the resources at <https://www.mothersunion.org/praying-with-purpose>

What is prayer?

- Relationship
- Prayer gives me peace in this troubled world
- Prayer is being mindful of others and situations
- Practice the presence of God, Brother Lawrence
- Prayer means of interaction with God
- Prayer gives me the strength to carry on
- Always with God
- Prayer nurtures and nourishes
- Praise God, rejoice and give thanks
- "My private time with my God"
- Practice for the presence of God (wherever we are & whatever we're doing) - *Brother Lawrence*
- ACTS Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving & Supplication
- Prayer time is a Fellowship
- Prayer is for everyone whoever you are, wherever you are, however you feel, whatever your need

What we appreciate about Praying with purpose

- A resource to share with all the home groups in our parish as well as MU! Think it'll be great for loads of people!
- We realised how well this resource will help us focus and hone in on our prayers
- Prayer at stage 2 gives confidence to everyone that they can pray and words being heard, if anyone not confident in praying out loud
- The resource might enable those who find it difficult to pray aloud or impromptu to begin to do so. Also as we repeat God's word daily back to him knowing there are many others doing the same faith and confidence is increased
- As people take time to actually search scriptures and see answers to prayers, faith and confidence will be built
- So important to rejoice in answers to prayer and not be embarrassed that they've been answered.... then we can say thank you & be encouraged to keep on praying
- Giving people a structure gives them confidence to pray

Ways to use Praying with purpose

- I like the thought of having a set time for a 'Branch' prayer!
- I was given some good ideas for using this as basis for our Wave of Prayer in February
- Step 4 The Grace is a wonderful blessing & is one that everyone can join in with
- Produce a session for when we would normally meet as a branch. Could be mailed out to members to use at the same time. Focus on contact with each other - first, "Be Still and know that I am God", second - give thanks for those we've spoken to

since the last session, third - prayer for members we haven't spoken to yet, fourth, end with the grace

- Hold a prayer meeting on zoom specifically for the trustees, using the template and pray for members around the diocese and for new trustees
- Start our monthly newsletter with thanks for answered prayer before launching into news...
- A wonderful resource to use at our Trustee Meeting. Also for all members to pray for a particular challenge in our diocese collectively, same day, same time
- Thinking of using it with our Branch Leader Forum in March
- Will use it as I record prayers for our YouTube Sunday service
- Church Prayer Meeting, Branch group - large or small gatherings. Time may be limited and the structure is helpful
- I like the idea of using the Lord's Prayer as a starter for phone praying and I like the ABC of prayer at home especially in the lockdown
- Include Praying with purpose into the longer phone calls we're making and maybe stick to audio rather than face time as people may feel more comfortable to share

Other prayer ideas

- This is what I use for doing Cathedral Prayers online - <https://streamyard.com/b>
- We attach the Midday Prayers at the end of our monthly newsletter
- Our prayer team produce something in a similar format to this for Midday Prayers to be used by members and branches
- One of our members organised a prayer meeting for people in their street. Invitation letters posted through doors. Loud speaker provided on the day. Sung Amazing Grace together and he prayed for the NHS, those affected by COVID-19, those feeling isolated and abandoned and to his surprise people clapped their hands to show their appreciation
- The prayer resources on the website are excellent and will be useful in sharing with my branch members and also with Diocesan members in our Cluster
- We use our Wave of Prayer as a time to focus and engage with members rather than just those who attend meetings
- If you normally have a prayer walk in a group, you can do a virtual one with one person and their phone walking and others Zooming or What's App
- Our daily walk in the village is an excellent time for thanking God and remembering those who we are not seeing at this time as we walk past their houses
- Prayer Tree suggestion at home or in churchyard
- Have a photo or a stone or something in your hand to focus on
- Use the mustard seed resource of praying in steps as people feel very overwhelmed at the moment and it would be helpful to focus in on one thing at a time
- Pray for members each day using their surname alphabetically over Lent
- Prayer focussed WhatsApp group with a reflection

Examples of prayer times devised by groups in breakout rooms

1. Theme: communication within our Branches during restricted times

Step 1.

Encourage faith with Bible verse

Jesus promises: Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.

Matthew 18:20

Step 2:

Introduce the theme and share prayer points

Step 3:

Have prayer partners in the branch who pray over the phone, on walks, on Zoom etc.

Write prayers and send to each other. Add to each other's prayers

Each bring an object to the prayer time and ask Holy Spirit to trigger prayer ideas as all focus on the objects

Step 4:

Choose one of the blessings suggested in the Praying with purpose resource

2. Theme: General prayer and sharing time

Step 1.

Encourage faith with Bible verse:

Jesus promises: Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.

Matthew 18:20

Step 2:

Share any answers to prayer people have experienced

Thank God for specific things in order to recognise how blessed we are by God e.g. for the Covid-19 vaccine rollout; for green spaces to enjoy

Step 3:

Ask for Holy Spirit's guidance.

Use silence to bring prayers rather than use too many words

Use e.g. candle, image, stone, holding cross to become centred in prayer

Step 4:

Use a blessing focussing on how God is grace and truth, not a philosophy!

3. Theme: Viability of Mothers' Union

Step 1.

Encourage faith with Bible verse:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Step 2:

Give thanks for financial answers to prayer: the response to the urgent appeal; the amount raised through the Christmas appeal

Step 3:

Pray for vacant positions to be filled and for there to be a culture of sharing responsibility, as those in various roles are under pressure in these times

Pray in steps like parable of mustard seed which starts tiny and ends with faith to move mountains.

Use hymn: Songs of thankfulness and praise by Christopher Wordsworth

Step 4:

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Traditional gaelic blessing

Other ideas to use in a prayer time.

Make sure everyone knows the theme for the prayer time beforehand

Step 1.

Encourage faith with Bible verse

This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. *Psalm 118:24*

You could also sing this song together

When praying for families etc.

Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.' *Matthew 19:14*

Step 2.

Share answers to prayers which relate to the theme of the prayer time and give thanks to God for them

Step 4.

Use Mary Sumner's personal prayer